



# EPIGRAM



Epilepsy Association of Calgary

October 2005

Volume 10, Issue 2

To support independence, quality of life, and community participation for people with, and affected by, epilepsy.

## The Epilepsy Association of Calgary

Presents

# The Jazzy Penguin



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### In Celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the Epilepsy Association of Calgary

Featuring

#### The Johnny Summers Quintet

Johnny Summers is one of Calgary's most celebrated jazz artists, who writes, records, and performs his music locally and around the world. He has a strong local following, and we are pleased that he will be joining our 50th anniversary celebration! For more information on Johnny Summers, visit his website at [www.johnnysummers.com](http://www.johnnysummers.com).

#### The Jazzy Penguin Event Details

**DATE:** Monday December 5th, 2005

**LOCATION:** The Rose & Crown Pub and Restaurant

1503 - 4th Street S.W.

(attached parking lot, pay lot, and street parking available)

**Doors open at 6:30 p.m.**

**Dance to the Music of the Johnny Summers Quintet  
from 8:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m.**

**Tickets are \$50.00 each & include event admission, one  
beverage ticket, and a variety of hot & cold h'ordeuvres.**

#### Tickets

- Order by telephone using your Mastercard or Visa by calling our office at 230-2764
- In person at the Epilepsy Association of Calgary
- By mailing a cheque or money order to the **Epilepsy Association of Calgary** with the requested number of tickets to 4112 - 4th Street N.W. • Calgary, Alberta T2K 1A2

*Tickets ordered by mail or telephone will be mailed up to one week prior to the event, and then will be held at the door for pick-up.*

#### The Evening Will Include:

Silent Auction

50/50 Draw

Caricature Portraits

### CALLING 1-866-EPILEPSY

If you live outside the Calgary and Red Deer local calling areas, you can reach us at no cost to yourself at our toll free number to ensure that support, information, and answers to your questions are just a telephone call away.

If you live within the Calgary calling area, please call us at **230-2764**.

If you live within the Red Deer calling area, please call us at **358-3358**.

*Come Celebrate with Us!*

# 50th Anniversary News

## 50th Anniversary Face Lift

As part of our 50th anniversary celebrations, the Epilepsy Association is getting a 50th Anniversary Facelift. This project is possible thanks to the support of the Government of Alberta - Community Facility Enhancement Fund, the generous assistance of Providence Community Furnishings - who donated paint and a painter, and our own volunteers who have been assisting us over the summer. We have nearly finished the interior repainting, and will make repairs to the roof, heating system, and other building related items in need of attention.

Many thanks to everyone involved!



## 50th Anniversary Pins

50th Anniversary Pins are now on sale. These delightful pins feature our special 50th anniversary logo and are available at a cost of \$5.00 each. Help commemorate this special anniversary by ordering yours today! A limited number of pins are available and can be ordered via credit card by calling the office at 230-2764, or by mail (cheque or money order) indicating the number of pins being ordered, and a contact name and address for sending them.

**Congratulations on your 50th Anniversary.** We share your pride in all that you have contributed to our community through the years, and the many lives you have touched. Happy Anniversary to the Board and Staff of the Epilepsy Association and best wishes from all of us at United Way. Thank you for your contributions to our community for 50 years!

*Ruth Ramsden-Wood*  
President, United Way of Calgary and Area



## IN MEMORIAM...

It is with deep sadness that we announce the passing of Wendy Waite in July of 2005. Many of you will remember Wendy, who participated in a number of our programs, volunteered for numerous activities, and who graduated from our first comedy class in 2001. Our thoughts are with her family during this difficult time!

## Board of Directors 2005 – 2006

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**The staff and Board of Directors of the Epilepsy Association of Calgary extend heartfelt thanks to all our donors, members, and volunteers for support of our Calgary and Central Alberta offices.**

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**Krista Anderson, Program Coordinator**  
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TOGETHER  
WE ARE MAKING  
A DIFFERENCE

**Epilepsy. Anyone Can Have a Seizure.  
Anyone Can Learn to Respond to a Seizure.  
Anyone... Even You.**

**NOVEMBER IS EPILEPSY  
EDUCATION MONTH**

November is almost upon us and we are busy getting ready to promote epilepsy. Once again, November has been proclaimed as "Epilepsy Education Month" by Calgary Mayor, Dave Bronconnier, and Red Deer Mayor Morris Flewwelling. We will be busy distributing posters, educating people about epilepsy, holding public information displays, and more. Watch for electronic sign messages around the city as well. We have a couple of new activities that you can also be involved in:

- **Poster Blitzes** – These are scheduled in Calgary for Saturday, October 22, 2005 from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. (near the EAC office) and Thursday October 27, 2005 from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. (downtown), followed by refreshments. If you would like to help out, please contact Melanie at 230-2764.
- **Community Champions for Epilepsy** – We are looking for volunteers to deliver information in their own areas – perhaps to your workplace, school class room, community or daycare centre, or other organizations and businesses with whom you have contact. Become a Community Champion for Epilepsy!

In Calgary - Call Carla at 230-2764 to arrange for your kit and help us spread the word!

In Central Alberta - Contact Krista at 358-3358.

**EPILEPSY**  
**ANYone** → CAN HAVE A SEIZURE  
 CAN LEARN TO RESPOND TO A SEIZURE  
**ANYone** → **even YOU**

Photo Credit: Chris Keating, CHC Fotograf

**EPILEPSY ASSOCIATION OF CALGARY**  
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 Calgary, AB  
 T2K 1A2  
 403-230-2764

**CENTRAL ALBERTA OFFICE:**  
 303, 4822-50th Street  
 Red Deer, AB  
 T4N 1X2  
 403-358-3358

FOR MORE INFORMATION:  
 → [www.epilepsycalgary.com](http://www.epilepsycalgary.com)



## EPILEPSY ASSOCIATION OF CALGARY



### Epilepsy Discussion/ Support Group Meetings

Wednesdays - 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

At the Epilepsy Association of Calgary  
4112 - 4 St NW, Calgary AB

**November 23, 2005**  
**December 14, 2005**  
**January 25, 2006**  
**February 22, 2006**  
**March 29, 2006**

For more information contact Janice at 230-2764  
or email at [epilepsy.jshaw@telusplanet.net](mailto:epilepsy.jshaw@telusplanet.net)

### Taking Control of Your Wellness Skills Development Program

On-going registration is available for this program based on the work of Joel Reiter, MD., Donna Andrews, and Charlotte Janis, who developed a book and program, "Taking Control of Your Epilepsy". Taking Control of Your Wellness Skills Development is a holistic health approach that considers the entire individual - physiological, psychological, intra-psychic, interpersonal, and social components of the participant. The program provides skills and tools that help participants learn to control the impact of epilepsy on his/her life. The program consists of weekly individual sessions, with some homework in between. The required time commitment is 12 to 15 weeks. For more information, contact Janice at 230-2764.

### Upcoming Information Sessions

#### Epilepsy and Women's Issues

**Guest Speaker: Dr. Nathalie Jette, Neurologist**  
**Wednesday November 16, 2005**  
**7:00 to 9:30 p.m.**

Throughout the female life cycle, epilepsy presents a number of challenges and concerns. Hormonal changes at puberty, during the child bearing years, and at menopause, can have an impact on epilepsy, and most women have many questions about how these life changes may affect them. Please note the Dr. Jette will replace Dr. Hanson at this session. Dr. Jette is new to Calgary and has a great deal of expertise about issues of concern to women living with epilepsy. You won't want to miss it!

#### Introduction to Puppetry

**Guest Presenter: Pam Atkinson**  
**Wednesday January 11, 2006 - 7:00 to 9:30 p.m.**

This session will cover the basics of making and using a shadow puppet. Why - because it's fun, creative, and a great way to awaken your imagination! Pam is a talented artist and puppeteer, and we are thrilled that she will share her creative talents with us. We couldn't think of a better way to start off the New Year!



**All Sessions will be held at the Epilepsy Association of Calgary, 4112 - 4 Street NW, Calgary, Alberta.**

**Anyone with or concerned with epilepsy (parents, friends, spouses, peers) are welcome to attend these sessions.**

**Check our website for additional sessions and updates ([www.epilepsycalgary.com](http://www.epilepsycalgary.com))**

**For more information contact Janice at 230-2764, 1-866-EPILEPSY, or email at [epilepsy.jshaw@telusplanet.net](mailto:epilepsy.jshaw@telusplanet.net).**



### WE'RE HAVING A PARTY!!

Mark your calendars for **Thursday, December 8th, 2005**. We will provide the food. The party will be held at 4112 - 4th Street NW, from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. **PLEASE RSVP TO CARLA BY DECEMBER 3, 2005** to ensure that we have food and refreshments for all! She can be reached at 230-2764 or by email at [epilepsy.carla@telusplanet.net](mailto:epilepsy.carla@telusplanet.net).

## United Way Campaigns Shift into High Gear

United Way Campaigns are in full swing in both Calgary and Central Alberta. Please consider making a donation to your local United Way if you can. The United Way in both Calgary and Central Alberta are successful thanks to hundreds of committed volunteers who do an unbelievable job of raising funds! Programs in Calgary and Central Alberta benefit from this effort. Together – we really can make a difference!



TOGETHER  
WE ARE MAKING  
A DIFFERENCE

## We're Having a Raffle!

Raffle Ticket sales are underway in Calgary and Central Alberta, and we have a number of great prizes for each raffle. Each raffle is separate, so the funds stay in either Calgary or Central Alberta where they are raised. Proceeds help fund our programming in Calgary and Central Alberta. If you are enterprising, enthusiastic, and willing to support this initiative by helping to sell, or buy tickets – please call us! Winners names will be published in the New Year. Did we mention that we have a \$50 gift certificate for dinner for the volunteer in Calgary and in Central Alberta who sells the most tickets!

- In Calgary – Kathy or Melanie – 230-2764
  - In Central Alberta – Krista – 358-3358
- Or – 1-866-EPILEPSY

### CENTRAL ALBERTA OFFICE



### Epilepsy Discussion/Support Groups & Information Sessions – TBA

Check our website ([www.epilepsycalgary.com](http://www.epilepsycalgary.com) – Central Alberta Link) for updates.

We are currently seeking space in which to hold information sessions, support and information meetings. If you know of somewhere accessible and inexpensive – please contact Krista.

For more information contact Krista at 358-3358 or 1-866-EPILEPSY  
e-mail: [epilepsy.kanderson@telus.net](mailto:epilepsy.kanderson@telus.net)

### Teen Program for Central Alberta Teens Living with Epilepsy

A small group of young people affected by epilepsy began meeting last fall. If you are a young person living with epilepsy, and would like to learn more about the opportunity to meet others who share your concerns – the group would love to meet you. There are no meeting dates scheduled at this time; however, if you are interested, contact us and we will let you know when and where the next gathering will be held. This group is interested not only in meeting and supporting one another, but in looking for ways they can contribute to creating understanding about epilepsy.

For more information contact Krista at 358-3358, 1-866-EPILEPSY, or email: [epilepsy.kanderson@telus.net](mailto:epilepsy.kanderson@telus.net)

### Christmas Party and 5th Anniversary Celebration

December 1, 2005 is the Central Alberta Office Christmas Party and 5th Anniversary Celebration.

Time - 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.  
Kerry Wood Nature Centre  
6300 – 45th Avenue Red Deer, Alberta

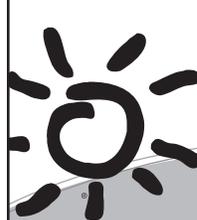
Join us as we celebrate the festive season and our 5th anniversary in Central Alberta. We'll have some special guests and music, and will recognize and thank some of our special volunteers and the United Way of Central Alberta. There will be a light lunch (sandwiches and munchies), door prizes, and fun!

Please **RSVP to Krista by November 26, 2005 if you plan to attend**, at 358-3358 or by email at [epilepsy.kanderson@telus.net](mailto:epilepsy.kanderson@telus.net) We look forward to having you join us!

VOLUNTARY Donations will be gratefully accepted at the door – but are not mandatory to participate or attend.



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# A Word About Medications...

**Krista Anderson, BScN - Central Alberta Office**

Last spring I had the opportunity to attend the Seizures and Epilepsy Education (SEE) program presented by Dr. Robert Mittan, in Victoria. During the two-day conference he discussed some general tips for people taking anticonvulsant medications. I thought these principles were worth sharing.

**1. Use the right medication for your type of seizure.** Although you don't prescribe your own medication, you can help your physician by providing accurate descriptions of your seizures. Although it would be convenient, you can't schedule your seizures to occur while in the doctor's office! Your doctor may never see you have a seizure. S/he relies on YOUR description(s) to determine what your seizure type(s) is/are. Arm yourself with knowledge about the different types of seizures so you (and your family) know what to look for. If you are prepared with descriptions and information you can knowledgably discuss medication options with your physician.

**2. Maintain proper blood levels.** Your medication must be at the right level in your blood to be effective. This is known as the "Therapeutic Range". The therapeutic range is a blood level high enough to control seizures but not so high that toxic side effects are exhibited. Every drug has a different therapeutic range. Although therapeutic ranges are published with other drug information it is important to know that these are averages. YOUR therapeutic range for any given drug is unique to YOU! For example, Bob and Mary may be on the same seizure medication, but Mary requires a higher blood level than Bob to control her seizures. Mary does not experience any toxic effects at her level, but Bob may if his blood level got as high as Mary's as his seizures are controlled at a lower blood level. Although this can be confusing the important thing to remember is: The amount of drug in your system (your blood level) must be monitored. This means regular blood tests. So when should blood levels be taken?

- When beginning a new epilepsy medication.
- When good control is established. You want to know what your blood level is when you have good seizure control!
- When/If you have an unusual increase in seizures. Maybe your blood level is too low. There can be many reasons for this such as growth/weight gain, illness with vomiting/diarrhea [drug isn't getting absorbed into your blood stream], or missed or late doses of medication.
- When/If side effects are present. Perhaps the medication is at too high a level in your bloodstream.
- When a new medication is added. Whether the medication is for epilepsy or something else, medications can affect each other and your blood levels.
- During pregnancy.

- Any time your physician recommends it.
- Remember your doctor must order the blood tests so discuss this with her/him.

**3. Use only one seizure medication when possible.** A popular myth is that more medication equals more seizure control. The numbers tell a different story, so discuss this with your physician.

Number of Medications	% of Control
1	80-90%
2	10-20%
3 or more	Rarely controlled

A final reminder... The use of medication(s) should not to be taken lightly. Be sure to share your questions and concerns with your physician. You should never stop taking your medications on your own. Discontinuing anti-convulsant medication must be done slowly under a doctor's care and involves gradually lowering the dose so your body can adapt to lower levels. Sudden withdrawal can cause severe seizures which can become a medical emergency. Following the principles of medication management can help to make your medications work for you! Setting the stage for good seizure control is everyone's responsibility. Help your doctor to help you - by taking your medication as prescribed and learning about your seizures and medications! (Visit Dr. Mittan's website at: [www.theseeprogram.com](http://www.theseeprogram.com))

## Lamictal and Birth Control Pills

Women using the anti-epilepsy drug, Lamictal (lamotrigine), need to be aware that the use of this medication may reduce the effectiveness of oral contraceptives. In turn, the use of oral contraceptives may reduce the effectiveness of Lamictal. If you are taking Lamictal, be sure to consult with your physician before starting or discontinuing the use of oral contraceptives and to discuss your situation and options for contraception and optimal seizure control.

Source - GlaxoSmithKline - [www.gsk.ca](http://www.gsk.ca)

## MoMo Dance Theatre - Mixed Ability Dance Workshops For Adults

- **Thursday Class** - 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. at VRRRI • 3304 - 33 Street N.W. "Pay What You Can"
  - **Saturday Class** - 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. at West Hillhurst Community Centre - North Door • 1940 - 6th Avenue N.W. - \$8.00 per class
- Drop-Ins Welcome... Call 283-1592 for more information.

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to all those who have supported our work and who share our commitment towards the promotion of independence and quality of life for those affected by epilepsy. To the many “unsung heroes” who have contributed, but don’t wish their names published – our heartfelt thanks to you as well. You know who you are!

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## Donors are only listed in the print version of the Epigram

We recognize our donors in our quarterly newsletter and our members and donors in our Annual Report. These documents are shared with members, funders, program participants, and others in the community who are interested in our work.

In accordance with Privacy Legislation: **if you do not wish to have your name published**, please call us at 230-2764 or indicate your wishes in the form below and send it to us by fax or mail to the Epilepsy Association of Calgary, 4112 – 4 Street NW, Calgary AB T2K 1A2.

**I do not wish to have my name published in the Annual Report or Epigram Newsletter.**

Name (Please Print) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## 50th Anniversary Advertising Opportunity

We are now accepting advertising in the Epigram Newsletter. If you have an advertisement you would like to included, rates are as follows:

**Standard Business Card Size - \$50.00 – in recognition of EAC’s 50 years**

**One Quarter Page - \$100.00**

**One Half Page - \$200.00**

For further information, please call Kathy at 230-2764. Advertisements are subject to the approval of the Executive Director and do not constitute endorsement of any product or service by the Epilepsy Association of Calgary.

### NEWSLETTER DISCLAIMER

*Material contained in this newsletter concerning epilepsy, research, treatment, and patient experiences is solely for information purposes. Each individual’s experiences of epilepsy are different. Please consult your physician for medical advice. Articles published in the Epigram newsletter do not necessarily represent the official policies or endorsements of the Association and its members.*

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Email: [epilepsy.calgary@telusplanet.net](mailto:epilepsy.calgary@telusplanet.net)  
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# MEMBER/DONOR FORM

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Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_

- Annual Membership .....\$20.00  
(January to December 2005)
- Life Membership..... \$200.00
- Donation amount.....\$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Total.....\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Payment method:

- Cheque       Money Order
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Credit card number \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry Date \_\_\_\_\_

Cardholder signature \_\_\_\_\_

Pre-Authorized Credit Card Payment Program for Donations Only:

- Yes, I prefer to make a monthly donation that will help support the programs and services of the association year-round.
- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per month, beginning on the 15th day of each month until otherwise notified.

A tax-deductible receipt will be issued for charitable registration number 11890 0778 RR001.

## A WORD ABOUT PRIVACY

The Epilepsy Association of Calgary respects your privacy. As such, we do not share, sell, rent, or trade our membership lists, donor lists, volunteer lists, or participant lists with any outside organizations. Personal information provided in the context of program participation is never shared without your written consent, unless there is a legal or ethical obligation to do so. Information you provide us is used to deliver services, keep you informed about agency activities and opportunities, fund-raising initiatives and events, volunteer opportunities.

**If you no longer wish to receive some or all of the information we provide, you can contact us by telephone, fax, or e-mail, and we will remove your name from any or all of contact lists in accordance with your wishes.**

Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to  
Epilepsy Association of Calgary  
4112 - 4 Street NW  
Calgary, Alberta T2K 1A2  
Email: epilepsy.calgary@telusplanet.net

